

COLUSA COUNTY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION

Minutes of Public Meeting

January 27, 2000

The meeting of the Colusa County Children and Families Commission was called to order at 3:06 p.m. in the conference room at the Children's Services offices at 345 5th Street, Suite B, Colusa, California. Commissioners Dolores Gomez, Barbara Hankins, Nancy Parriott and Christy Scofield were present, constituting a quorum.

Items discussed and actions taken in accordance with the publicly-posted agenda were as follows:

1. Approval of Minutes: January 11, 2000 Meeting

Commissioner Gomez moved to approve the minutes without correction; motion seconded by Commissioner Hankins. The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote (4/0).

2. Public Comment

- Persons attending the meeting were introduced.
- A brief report was given on the Proposition 10 Technical Assistance Center that was recently established by the California Center for Health Improvement. The center includes an information clearinghouse with various materials that can help county commissions, and also pays for experienced consultants to work with county commissions to address specific technical assistance needs.
- A conference in Redding was attended that provided good information on public relations and media relations for county commissions.
- Commissioner Scofield reported receiving a call from the "No on Proposition 28" campaign seeking an endorsement. She stated that she cannot provide an endorsement. The position of the commission is that it is appropriate to speak in favor of Proposition 10 but not to take a position on Proposition 28.
- Social Entrepreneurs, Inc. has been selected as the consultants to support the strategic planning process for Glenn County. This should help efforts to coordinate planning, funding, services and administration between Colusa County and Glenn County where appropriate.

3. Report on Funds

A check was received from the state for the \$50,000 planning grant. Another check for \$46,729 was also received from the state in January, which must be held in trust until the strategic plan is adopted. The latter check will be added to the approximately \$212,000 previously received from the state and held in trust.

The County maintains one master account that combines funds from all sources, including those of the Children and Families Commission. It is the responsibility of the Commission to track funds received, expenditures made, and the current balance.

4. Payment of Expenses

There are advertising invoices that need to be paid, as well as travel expense reimbursements. These expenditures have already been approved by the Commission at previous meetings. Commissioner Scofield will follow up on getting a purchase order / claims system set up with the County Department of Health and Human Services so payments can be made on these expenses.

5. Memorandum of Understanding with the County of Colusa

Commissioner Scofield is revising the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) based on the changes made and issues raised at the January 11, 2000, meeting. An updated version of the MOU will be presented to the Commission at the next meeting for approval.

6. Report on State Commission Meeting

Mike Smith of Social Entrepreneurs distributed a written report on the January 20th meeting of the State Commission that was held in Orange County and gave an oral summary of the meeting. Items of particular note for Colusa County were:

- A "welcome baby" kit is being developed containing videos, brochures and other materials to help parents with early childhood development and parenting issues. The kit should be available by the end of March and is intended to go to the parents of every child born in California. We may have them available for the Colusa Family Fair in April.
- The statewide media campaign started on January 25th and will include TV, radio, and print ads geared to smoking cessation and early childhood development. A new toll-free number, 1-800-KIDS-025, will be promoted as a resource for people all over the state to get information on parenting and early childhood development. Coordination is likely to be needed in the future between Colusa County and the State Commission's staff to ensure that the state office has accurate information about resources available in Colusa County.
- The Governor's proposed 2000/2001 budget for the state has a number of funding increases for child care and Healthy Families. It was noted that many people in Colusa County qualify for Healthy Families, and Del Norte Clinics has a grant to do outreach for both Medi-Cal and Healthy Families to help increase enrollment.
- The State Commission has issued their first draft of state level outcomes and indicators. Copies of the draft were distributed to all attendees at the meeting. Public meetings on the draft are expected to be held in February.
- The State Commission approved \$38.5 million of new projects dealing with child care, literacy, health care, and mental health. None of these projects are expected to immediately impact Colusa County except possibly a new asthma control initiative for young children.

7. Community-Based Needs and Assets Assessment

Mike Smith distributed a first draft of a community-based needs and assets assessment report. The report is very preliminary in nature since it is based entirely on pre-existing information (county reports, past surveys and needs assessments, etc.) and does not incorporate results from the public forums planned by the Commission. Commissioners were encouraged to distribute the draft to anyone else that might be interested and to review the report and provide feedback on (1) accuracy of information, (2) any issues missing from the draft, and (3) ways to supplement the existing data with input directly from the community.

Corrections and enhancements to the draft report that were identified during the meeting:

- Mental health needs are not addressed at all in the draft and should be included in the next update.
- A better picture of substance abuse problems should be provided.
- The Child Protective Services statistics on page 15 are wrong; at a minimum, the number of reports due to caretaker absence are much too high.
- The number / percentage of children with anemia is wrong. This was due to a state error; the state lumped a portion of Los Angeles into Colusa's statistics. Childhood anemia is not a problem in Colusa County.
- The Transportation section should note that cab service only takes over after the bus is done, and that public transportation is no longer available to Yuba City.

8. Development Plan for Focus Groups

An extensive discussion was held regarding how to use focus groups or town meetings as a way of getting more input directly from parents and other interested members of the community. The following items were discussed.

- Both group discussions and written surveys will be used so people have multiple ways of providing input.
- The overall structure of the town meetings should be to start with everyone together to give an overview on Proposition 10 and what the Commission is trying to accomplish, split into smaller discussion groups with one in English and one in Spanish, then come back together to summarize the results of each discussion group.
- Meeting locations and tentative dates were set as follows:

Feb. 15	Maxwell	Maxwell Elementary School
Feb. 16	Colusa	Burchfield Primary School
Feb. 23	Arbuckle	Arbuckle Elementary School
Feb. 24	Williams	Williams Elementary School

Commissioners agreed to contact the Principal at each school to see if the school could be used and, if so, to work out dates and times. Mike Smith will provide a list of topics to cover with the principals.

- Child care will be provided during the town meetings. The Head Start sites can be used for child care everywhere except Maxwell, which does not have a Head Start location. Commissioner Gomez volunteered to arrange locations and qualified providers for child care.
- Food and drinks will also be provided as a further inducement to get people to come.
- The whisper system will be used to provide Spanish translations during the portions of the meetings that are held in one large group. Commissioner Gomez will follow up on scheduling the necessary equipment and will serve as the translator / facilitator for the Spanish language discussion group or will arrange for a translator / facilitator. A \$50 stipend for translators and child care providers was discussed but could not be voted on; this will be raised as an action item in the next Commission meeting.
- Flyers need to be prepared and distributed as soon as possible. Mike Smith will draft one, get it out quickly for review by the Commissioners, and then coordinate with Commissioner Gomez for a Spanish translation.
- Mike Smith will also draft a survey and set of guidelines for conducting the town meetings, for review at the next Commission meeting. The consensus was that the survey should focus on identifying primary needs that families have with infants, young children, and parental support.
- The town meetings will not be recorded. Commissioners volunteered to serve as recorders during the meetings, writing down public comments on flip chart pads.

- Methods of advertising the meetings and trying to get as many people as possible to show up included community briefs and letters to the editor in the local newspaper, distribute flyers at all child care provider and Head Start sites, put flyers at post offices / grocery stores / laundromats, distribute flyers at the health clinic and Children's Services office, send flyers home with all kids in the K – 3 grades (distributed by the teachers), and insert announcements in church bulletins.

9. Adjournment and Next Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m. The next meeting of the Commission was set for February 8, 2000, from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. in the Morse Conference Room, Colusa Public Library, Colusa, California.

Minutes prepared by Mike Smith, consultant to the Commission.